

COMPARING CULTURAL NORMS AND VALUES

Aspects of Culture	Mainstream American Culture	Other Cultures
1. Sense of self and space	Informal Handshake	Formal Hugs, bows, handshakes
2. Communication and language	Explicit, direct communication Emphasis on content—meaning found in words	Implicit, indirect communication Emphasis on context—meaning found around words
3. Dress and appearance	"Dress for success" ideal Wide range in accepted dress	Dress seen as a sign of position, wealth, prestige Religious rules
4. Food and eating habits	Eating as a necessity—fast food	Dining as a social experience Religious rules
5. Time and time consciousness	Linear and exact time consciousness Value on time—time=money	Elastic and relative time consciousness Time spent on enjoyment of relationships
6. Relationships, family, friends	Focus on nuclear family Responsibility for self Value on youth, age seen as handicap	Focus on extended family Loyalty and responsibility to family Age given status and respect
7. Values and norms	Individual orientation Independence Preference for direct confrontation of conflict	Group orientation Conformity Preference for harmony
8. Beliefs and attitudes	Egalitarian Challenging of authority Individuals control their destiny Gender equity	Hierarchical Respect for authority and social order Individuals accept their destiny Different roles for men and women
9. Mental processes and learning style	Linear, logical, sequential Problem-solving focus	Lateral, holistic, simultaneous Accepting of life's difficulties
10. Work habits and practices	Emphasis on task Reward based on individual achievement Work has intrinsic value	Emphasis on relationships Rewards based on seniority, relationships Work is a necessity of life

Source: Gardenswartz, Lee, and Rowe, Anita. "Managing Diversity: A Complete Desk Reference and Planning Guide."

"I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any." *Gandhi*